

K-9 Corps

<http://www.k-9corps.org>

A charitable project of TriCom

February 8, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sara Westgor	Executive Coordinator	920-722-7151
	SWestgor001@new.rr.com	
Jeff Riedl	Media Coordinator	920-727-9475
	jeffriedl@earthlink.net	
Jeff Jorgenson	Menasha PD Liason	920-967-3500
	jjorgens@ci.menasha.wi.us	

[MENASHA, WI] Responding to the obvious need within their community, a group of concerned citizens have stepped forward to raise necessary funding for the addition of a K-9 Unit within the Menasha Police Department. **The K-9 Corps**, a charitable project of TriCom, is working to raise \$35,000 for the purchase and equipping of a new canine member to be added to the force, along with the training for both the dog and an officer on the force who would become the dog's handler.

"The purpose of the dog would be threefold" according to Officer Paul Scheppf, who assembled an extensive report and recommendation to Chief Robert Stanke this past summer. "The dog would be trained to detect illegal drugs, to track and locate suspects and lost victims, and would also serve in an outreach capacity to raise awareness within the schools and at community events." Officer Scheppf, who has been announced as the officer who will be the dog's handler also notes that the dog would not be trained for apprehension of suspected criminals ... this would be a **no-bite** member of the Menasha P.D.

At the first meeting of the K-9 Corps, Officer Jeff Jorgenson shared relevant data about the need – specifically highlighting the noticeable increase in drug arrests over the past three years and recalling the gang beatings of young teens at the Jefferson Park pool along with other activity in the city parks last summer.

== MORE ==

Officer Jorgenson also noted that statistics may appear misleading when this Unit goes in to service as the team's efficiency will likely show an increase in the number of drug-related arrests before those who traffic the drugs would actually move their activity out of the city.

Within a month of the initial meeting, the central group of Board members have obtained the cooperation of TriCom to facilitate 501(c)3 fundraising status, have formed sub-committees to best utilize each member's talents, and have launched a website (***K-9corps.org***) to inform the community and potential donors of the needs and benefits related to this project. A grant writing team has researched and targeted several sources of funding and they are pursuing those resources, while an events committee is also investigating opportunities to gain exposure for the group as well as grass-roots community involvement and donations.

Sara Westgor, Executive Coordinator of the K-9 Corps has laid out the timetable. "Our goal is to pull this funding together so that an officer can begin training at a local facility this fall. Doing so would meet the urgent need for cost-efficient tracking and drug detection while saving substantial costs by training the team within driving distance of home rather than sending them to another state... potentially as far as New Mexico or California."

END

- *All contacts are available for phone or live interviews.*
- *Extensive background information regarding drug-detecting canines in law enforcement is available at the group's website and through links posted therein.*
- *.mp3 Audio Downloads (Quotes) are available at <http://K-9corps.org/audio>*